

Jude 20-25 Fighting for the Faith pt.4_Living in the midst of apostasy for God.

Welcome: Good morning, BFC!

It's a joy to welcome each of you to worship today. My Name is Douglas and I get to serve as the Lead Pastor here. Whether this is your first time with us or you've been with us for years, we're so glad you've joined us. This is a place where we gather to worship Jesus, experience his love, and encourage each other.

This morning, I want to remind you of a simple truth: you belong here. Whatever your week has looked like—whether it was filled with victories, challenges, or moments of sorrow—you are welcome in this place. God invites each of us to draw near to Him, to give our burdens to Him, and to rest in His presence.

As we prepare to dive into God's Word today, let's open our hearts and minds to what He wants to teach us. May this time together strengthen our faith, challenge us to grow, and inspire us to live for His glory alone.

Recap Intro:

Well we've made it, today is our final sermon in our "Fighting For The Faith" series from the book of [Jude](#). I trust that you have been informed, challenged, and encouraged.

As a reminder, in week no.1 we were made aware that apostates are a clear and present threat to the church, working from within to derail us.

In week no.2 we looked in more detail at the actions of these apostates and discovered that their treachery will not go unpunished. God will judge them.

Last, week, week no.3 we learned how to identify apostates and what to do once we spot them.

And if you missed any of the previous sermons, or if you want to watch them again you can go to our website click the "watch" button and there you'll find our sermon library. As well as my full sermon manuscripts.

Sermon Intro: Today, is all about how to thrive in the faith amid apostasy. Speaking of thriving in the face of adversity, does any one know who the longest reigning heavyweight boxing champion is? This individual held the title from 1937-1949 a total of 11 years. He defended his title 26 consecutive time, which is unheard of today. And if you're thinking Muhammad Ali, you'd be wrong. The person I'm talking about is none other than Joe Louis, "the brown bomber".

Joe Louis

What made Joes successful was that beyond his insane work ethic and his drive to be the best, stood a man who believed that he was fighting for the greater good of a people and not simply himself. IOW it wasn't for fortune and fame, rather he fought on behalf of black Americans. Which in his day, if you know anything about American History was the "Jim Crow era" where black were treated "separate but equal". Second class citizen, an unavoidable nuisance.

I bring this up b/c like Joe, we Christians represent more than just ourselves. We fight for Jesus and we represent the Christian faith, the very faith that Jesus gave his life for.

Today as we wrap up our time in Jude, we're going to learn how to Fight For the faith so that we can rein as champions glorifying God in the process. And to help us rein as champions over apostasy, I have... **8 practices for thriving in the faith amid apostasy.**

To get started, you're going to need a Bible, sermon notes, something to write with, and an open mind that is ready to receive. Here at BFC we preach/teach from the Bible. line by line, verse by verse, we read the intended original meaning out of the text and we explore how those timeless truths apply to us today. I want you to see where I'm coming from and be able to study your notes later so... You'll need a Bible and sermon note.

Are you ready?? Alright...

8 practices for thriving in the faith amid apostasy.

Beginning with...

1. **Strengthen Your Faith. v20**

As in... Actively build your life on Christ.

Jude refers to his readers as “**dear friends**”, just like in v3. Essentially he’s saying fellow faith fighters,... “**as you build yourselves up in your most holy faith...**” The idea here is that this is constant work to be done by the church towards each other. Never should the church, the church universal or the local church become complacent. Just as a boxer continues to train lest they get outworked by their opponent and ultimately are defeated.

Not because they lack the skills, but because they failed to prepare. They didn’t stay in a constant state of readiness. The hunger and grit that once propelled them to victory has made them soft.

Like professional athletes, we must train to stay on top of our faith, lest we fail. So, strengthen your faith...

We do this in several ways:

- By gathering for worship on Sundays with a single focus—to lift high the name of Jesus Christ.
- By learning more about Jesus through His Word, growing in knowledge and understanding.
- By offering mutual encouragement and accountability through our Discipleship Groups.
- By serving alongside one another in ministries or outreach events, united in purpose.
- And by praying for one another. Might I add that prayer is one of the most impactful things we can do for each other? [James 5:16](#) says, “**The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.**” IOW, our prayers do great good for those we lift up.

We are blessed by the prayers of our fellow church members. God sees our hearts for each other and is moved to respond. He says, “I love it when my children look out for one another, and I will respond in kind.”

These practices—and many others—are examples of the work we need to be about daily. doing so helps us stay built up in the faith so that we can continue to walk in victory.

So, **strengthen your faith, that’s our first practice. 2nd,**

2. **Pray in the Spirit. v20**

This means maintaining a constant connection with God through prayer. Jude essentially says, “If you want to thrive in the midst of apostasy, then pray in the Holy Spirit.”

It’s important to clarify what this passage does not mean. This is not a reference to praying in tongues, as some have taught. Such an interpretation is not supported by the Greek—the original language in which this letter was written. The phrase “pray in” has several possible meanings, including: “by means of the Spirit,” “with the help of the Spirit,” “in the sphere of the Spirit,” or “in connection with the Spirit.” None of these interpretations suggest praying in tongues—a secret language understood only by God or angels.

When Jude says, “**Pray in the Holy Spirit,**” he is speaking about the manner and means by which we should pray, not some audible mystical language.

Let me attempt to make a correlation. In verse 8, we learned that the apostates justified their actions based on so-called revelations from their dreams. In the same way, claiming that “**praying in the Spirit**” requires speaking in tongues is another form of deception. Just as no one can verify the content of a dream, it’s impossible to validate the authenticity of tongues.

Furthermore, if praying in tongues were truly Spirit-led, why do people seem able to turn it on and off as if it were a radio? If God were the one speaking, we wouldn’t be able to control when He speaks, how long He speaks, or what He says.

But I digress. Having established what “**praying in the Spirit**” is not, let’s focus on what it actually looks like.

Praying in the Spirit involves:

- Praying according to what God places on our hearts. This implies we are in tune with Him. To pray in the Spirit, we must be spiritually aligned with God.
- Praying in accordance with God's will and nature. This requires spending time in His Word. We cannot pray according to God's will unless we know it. Prayers that contradict God's will or character will not be answered. This is why some people find themselves praying the same requests repeatedly, only to be met with silence from God.
- Sitting in silence and inviting the Holy Spirit to intercede. Praying in the Spirit doesn't always involve constant talking. It can mean being still before the Lord, allowing the Spirit to speak to the Father on our behalf.

Praying in the Spirit is about connection, alignment, and obedience. It's an ongoing dialogue with God where we surrender our hearts, seek His will, and receive guidance.

Thriving Christians pray, we pray in the spirit, that no 2. Our 3rd practice is...

3. Keep yourself in love with God. v21

Jude says, "**Keep yourselves in the love of God.**" Don't take this for granted. Being in God's love is not a foregone conclusion—it's not guaranteed. You can fall out of love with God, but He will never fall out of love with you. Did you hear that? God's love is constant. It's unchanging. It's not going anywhere.

But we, on the other hand, can drift away into the arms of another lover.

A solid two-thirds of the Old Testament is all about God's steadfast love for the Israelites despite their many affairs. They pursued other gods—little-g gods. Yet the Great I Am said, "I'll be here. My love is unconditional. I made a covenant with you. I know that I'm what's best for you, and I won't rest until I have you back in my arms."

Fast forward to Jude's day. The apostates were like spiritual con artists, pulling people away from God with seductive lies. They were Pied Pipers leading souls to destruction, and many people followed, knowing it was wrong but craving a god they could control.

Here's how it went down:

Some chased the prosperity gospel god: *"I want money, comfort, and success. Eternal rewards can wait—I want my payday now. No suffering, no sickness, just a cushy life."*

Others ran after the god of hyper-grace: *"This god doesn't care how I live. No repentance, no confession, no striving to sin less—just grace on tap. Why take responsibility when He's already covered it all?"*

Then there were the worshippers of the moral relativist god: *"This god bends to the culture. Whatever feels good must be good. Forget what Scripture says about marriage, sexuality, or truth—you do you, and this god will smile and nod."*

And finally, **some crowned themselves as gods.** Like the Word of Faith people who say... *"I can manifest my reality. Speak it, and it will happen. Want to be cancer-free? Speak it into existence. Want a new house? Just declare it. I am the master of my destiny."*

These are but a few examples. *The gods people want to follow are endless because the human heart has infinite ways of seeking to satisfy itself, this happens when we go untethered from the true God. Yet only the God who created our hearts has the power to quiet them, supplying what they truly need: a thriving, loving relationship with Him.*

Therefore, keep yourself in love with God. Only have eyes for Him. Be terrified at the notion of stepping out on him. Focus your heart, your attention, and your gaze on Jesus. See Him as your redeemer, your sustainer, and your all in all. There is but one God and you already have him, therefore there's no need to look anywhere else.

That's our 3rd practice... stay in love with Jesus, 4th...

4. Anticipate eternal life. v21

v21 says...**"21...waiting expectantly for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life."**

What a promise we have! Eternal life has been gifted to us, paid in full by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Here, Jude directs our gaze to the believer's ultimate hope—eternal life with God. Whether we enter into it upon our death or at

Christ's return, one thing is certain: there will never be a moment when we are not in the presence of the Lord. How our hearts should long for that day!

But notice Jude's phrase: "**waiting expectantly.**" What does it mean to wait expectantly for the fulfillment of this promise?

It means living with steadfast confidence that eternal life is yours. This confidence isn't just a thought or a feeling; it's a posture that shapes every corner of your life:

- **It influences how you treat others.** Knowing the mercy you've received compels you to reflect that mercy—showing kindness, patience, and forgiveness to others.
- **It changes how you spend your resources.** Every dollar, every hour is measured by eternity, leading you to invest in what lasts: faith, love, other people, and service to God.
- **It transforms your priorities.** Each decision is made with eternity in view, trusting God's promises over fleeting earthly gains. Trusting God's promises over the ebbs and flows of society.

Ultimately, waiting expectantly means living in the assurance that God's promise is already secure. Eternal life with Him isn't a "maybe" or a "someday"—it's as good as done.

Doesn't that truth stir your soul? It surely does mine, it makes me want to rejoice, to trust the Lord even more!

So, as we strive to live faithfully in a world riddled with apostasy and deceit, let us anchor ourselves in this promise: you have **eternal life**. A day is coming when we will stand in the presence of our God, and the cares of this life will forever be no more.

Rest in that hope. Let it shape your days and lift your soul.

That's the fourth practice. fifth...

5. Give Mercy to the Doubting. v22

As in offer compassion and guidance to those who struggle... v22 says "**Have mercy on those who waver;**"

Evidently, there were some in Jude's day who went back and forth between sound doctrine and apostasy. Trusting God and trusting in man. Although it would be easy if there was clean cut distinction between authentic disciples and those who are on the fence there simply isn't. And Jude calls his readers to "**have mercy**" be patient with those who waver.

Before we start cancelling people. Separating the sheep's from the goats so to speak. Let's consider God's ultimate will when it comes to humanity.

He made us to worship Him, to glorify him in all that we do... To live for Him above all us...

He didn't make us not to destroy us... and he take no pleasure in disciplining his children and or rendering judgment against us. That's the sentiment of ([2 Peter 3:9](#)).

Peter say... "**The Lord does not delay his promise** (his promise to reward some and punish others), **as some understand delay, but [God] is patient with us, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.**

Like the loving and patient Father that He is, God gives mercy, he waits on us to repent of our wicked ways so that he can grace us with forgiveness, save our souls, and graft us into his family. The only reason it may look like like God is passive towards sin is b/c he's giving all who will come to him time to actually come to him. An opportunity to repent and dedicate their lives to Him.

Therefore, so should we. I know, on last week I told you to flee from apostates and have nothing to do with them. But the people Jude is referring to are not committed apostates. They waiver, that means there's still hope for them. You might just be the person the Lord wants to use to help bring that person to true repentance. We have to be willing to put ourselves out their if it means helping a person turn back to Christ.

So yes, guard yourself against the influences of apostasy, but don't harden your heart against those who are struggling. Instead give mercy to the doubting, that's our 5th practice... 6th...

6. Rescue the lost. v23

This one is self explanatory is it not; we're to boldly share the Gospel, bringing the lost to salvation through Jesus Christ.

I like the optic of Jude's command in v23, he says... **23 save others by snatching them from the fire**... Apostates and non-believers are essentially standing on the rim of hell. like this guy posing for great photo opp.. so he thinks...

Picture an active volcano with someone walking dangerously close to the edge, oblivious to the molten lava below. At any moment, they could fall in. Similarly, death renders every person before the Lord. For non-believers, death places them in hell—a place of no return, just as there's no rescuing someone who falls into a volcano. Jude's command is clear: save them from destruction. Evangelize them. Preach the gospel to them *NOW*, before it's too late.

The time to share the gospel is the moment you encounter someone walking on the edge of spiritual peril. The rim of the volcano is no place for hesitation or delay. It's a place where life and death hang in the balance.

Don't hold back because of fear or discomfort. Remember, the gospel is "**the power of God for salvation**" ([Romans 1:16](#)). All you have to do is tell them about Jesus, God will do the rest. You're the person that God placed in their path to **snatch them from the fire**".

The most impactful way to minimize the impact of apostasy is by... Recusing the Lost so do your part. That's our sixth practice. Our 7th practice is a command with a warning...

7. Help others but guard your heart. v23b

Jude says it this way : "...**have mercy on others but with fear, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.**"

We're commanded to reach out to those who don't know Jesus and those who waver in their commitment to Jesus. However, this work is fraught with risks and requires wisdom and discernment. We must maintain a healthy respect for sin and our vulnerabilities, guarding ourselves against the temptation to re-engage in old habits.

One way to do this is by cultivating a hatred for sin—never making excuses for it or taking it lightly. Sin is dangerous, and we must treat it as such.

Super Mario Ghost

In some ways, sin behaves like the ghost in the Super Mario video game. As long as you confront it and keep your eyes on it, it cannot reach you. But the moment you turn your back, acting as if it's harmless, it stalks you down, waiting for the perfect opportunity to pounce on you.

When you see someone in need, don't walk blindly into their situation. Instead, keep your head on the swivel for risks, tricks, and traps. The enemy can use the plight of others to trick you, and all he needs is for you to drop your guard for a moment so that he can hit you with whammy. You thought you were helping someone, and you wind up becoming the victim. The rescuer needs to be rescued.

In my ministry, there have been times when I had to refuse help to someone in need and or get others involved. By God's grace I was able to discern that they meant me no good. Had I not been sensitive to the Holy Spirit I could have fallen in sin, and BFC would be looking for a new pastor.

Remain vigilant against those who seek to harm or deceive you. Not every cry for help is meant for you to answer. By all means, **help those who are in need, but keep your heart guarded**, exercise discernment and proceed with caution.

That's no7... Those are 7 practices of a disciple who thrives in the faith admits apostasy.

But how can we be sure that any of this will actually work? That our efforts won't be wasted? Our assurance doesn't rest on our own strength or even our commitment to these practices. Instead, it is grounded in God's unwavering faithfulness to us. Therefore...

8. Rest in God's holy divine assurance. v24-25

The power to thrive amidst apostasy doesn't come from us... Jude says, "**Now to him who is able to protect you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of his glory, without blemish and with great joy**" (v. 24). God does it all. He empowers us to work,. He leads and protects us while we're working, and ultimately He delivers us safely into glory. God is in complete control and he has us.

It's like a little child sitting in a shopping cart with a toy steering wheel. The child is convinced they're in control, steering through the aisles, but the truth is the parent is doing all the pushing, guiding, and ensuring their safety. The child's "steering" is an illusion of control, but the parent's work is what truly moves the cart. In the same way, God not only directs your path but also protects you while He carries you through life.

So, rest in God's holy divine assurance. Let Him guide, sustain, and complete His perfect work through you. Trust the One who holds the cart and knows your ultimate destination. **Rest in this assurance!!!**

Let's close our time in Jude by standing and affirming these truths over ourselves and up to God. Let's stand and read v24&25 together...

"24 Now to him who is able to protect you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of his glory, without blemish and with great joy," 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time, now and forever. Amen."

God is the one who has made our lives in him possible. I pray that [Jude 24](#)&25 would continually ring true in your hearts. And that you stay encouraged to keep "Fighting For The Faith..

Let's pray!

Lord thank you for this timely letter from Jude, surely apostates, and heretics have infiltrated your church. However they are but defeated, working in vein for satan. Ultimately, they will be made to stand punishment for their decision against you. May you have mercy on their souls, bring them to repentance. However, we have to live in the world with them, albeit differently from them.

Therefore, Help us Lord to live for your glory despite the reality of apostasy. Let us be obedient to these 8 practices. And rest in your blessed assurance... You are the one who protects us. You make us stand... You will deliver us in glory to be with you. You have all power and dominion. Therefore we will trust in you. Help us to walk in your truth. In Jesus name amen. Let's worship him now.

Closing

CC, P/Q's, Open Table, LGLP